

The President. Did that get any national play, that “Mikey, Mikey, Mikey”?

Q. With my family.

President’s Visit

Q. What about lunch, Mr. President? What do you think of it? Are you getting ready to dig in? What have you seen today? Are you pretty happy?

The President. Well, first of all, I knew our troops were good because I’ve been reading reports about how good they are. I got to see firsthand—I’m going to see all day long, firsthand—the esprit de corps is very high here. These soldiers are proud to wear the uniform. Great command staff; they’ve got highly motivated officers; they are well-trained. Every one of the troops, as I moved down the line, spoke a foreign language. To give you an example of how well-trained they are, the medics, these highly trained young men, can conduct—they can pull a tooth, or they can amputate a leg, if need be. I mean, these are fabulously trained soldiers. I’m real proud of their training.

One of the things we’ve got to make sure that Congress understands is that we’ve got to spend the money necessary to keep them highly trained. They all know we’re in for a long struggle. They’re prepared to make the sacrifices to meet that struggle.

I had the honor of meeting with the widows of two of the soldiers who died—and their dad and their mom of one of the guys—and to a person, they said, “Mr. President, don’t falter.” These people just lost a loved one, and they are just as resolved about winning this war on terror as I am. And I was very impressed by their steadfast support for what we’re doing and their understanding of the sacrifices necessary to defend freedom.

Now I’m going to eat my lasagna. If it gets cold, you have to eat the lasagna. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 12 noon while walking through the lunch line. In his remarks, the President referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Gen. Anthony Zinni, USMC (Ret.); and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this exchange. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President’s public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

March 9

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a Gridiron Club dinner.

March 11

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will visit Germany on May 22–23, Russia on May 23–26, and France on May 26–27.

March 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, where he visited the People’s Emergency Center, a social service agency for homeless women, teenagers, and their children. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the afternoon, the President had separate meetings in the Oval Office with Minister of Defense Sergey Borisovich Ivanov of Russia and President Islom Karimov of Uzbekistan.

The President declared a major disaster in Oregon and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm with high winds on February 7–8.

March 13

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council.

In the afternoon, the President attended a Friends of Ireland luncheon hosted by Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert in the Rayburn Room at the U.S. Capitol. Later, he returned to the White House and dropped by a White House symposium on writers of the Harlem Renaissance, hosted by Mrs. Bush.

The President announced his intention to nominate David A. Gross for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Communications and Information Policy in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy.

The President announced the appointment of Reuben Jeffery III as Special Advisor for Lower Manhattan Development.

March 14

In the morning, the President had CIA and FBI briefings. In the afternoon, he met with musician and activist Bono in the Oval Office concerning assistance for developing countries.

The President announced the following recipients of the National Medal of Arts for 2001: Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation; Rudolfo Anaya; Johnny Cash; Kirk Douglas; Helen Frankenthaler; Judith Jamison; Yo-Yo Ma; and Mike Nichols.

The President announced the following recipients of the National Humanities Medal for 2001: Jose Cisneros; Robert Coles; Sharon Darling; William Manchester; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Richard Peck; Eileen Jackson Southern; and Tom Wolfe.

The President announced his intention to nominate Phyllis Fong to be Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture.

March 15

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings. Later, he traveled to Fayetteville, NC, and then to Fort Bragg, NC. In the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC, and then went to Camp David, MD.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted March 13

Gorden Edward Eden, Jr., of New Mexico, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of New Mexico for the term of 4 years, vice John Steven Sanchez, term expired.

David Phillip Gonzales, of Arizona, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of Arizona for the term of 4 years, vice Alfred E. Madrid, term expired.

David A. Gross, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Communications and Information Policy in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy.

William P. Kruziki, of Wisconsin, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Wisconsin for the term of 4 years, vice Nannette Holly Hegerty, term expired.

John Lee Moore, of Texas, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Texas for the term of 4 years, vice Norris Batiste, Jr., term expired.

Michael Pack, of Maryland, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2004, vice Darryl J. Gless, term expired.

Charles M. Sheer, of Missouri, to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Missouri for the term of 4 years, vice Robert Bradford English, term expired.

Harold D. Stratton, of New Mexico, to be Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, vice Ann Brown.

Harold D. Stratton, of New Mexico, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for the remainder of the term expiring October 26, 2006, vice Ann Brown.